

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## OCTOBER IS ENERGY AWARENESS MONTH

(Columbia)-- The U.S. Department of Energy and the South Carolina Energy Office are celebrating the 25th annual "October Is Energy Awareness Month" campaign. The goal of Energy Awareness Month is to promote a greater public understanding and awareness of energy sources, how they can be used wisely and effectively, and the importance of energy to the economic prosperity and future of the United States and South Carolina. *Smart Energy Choices – support our economy, protect our environment, and increase our energy independence* is the theme of the 2004 observance.

Each day, South Carolinians depend on the benefits of energy, usually without considering the role that energy plays in our quality of life. Every aspect of our lives and those of our children and future generations is affected by the energy choices and decisions we make today. This could mean choosing an energy-efficient appliance for a home or business; comparing the energy requirements of various models when replacing personal or company-owned vehicles; having a local utility do an energy audit on your home; using mass transportation; investing in energy-efficient heating, cooling, and lighting systems; or simply turning off lights and equipment when not needed.

South Carolina is a growing state. As our economy has developed, so too have our energy needs. South Carolinians spend about \$10.2 billion on energy each year. Because we produce no uranium, no coal, no oil, and no natural gas, approximately 85 percent of this amount, or about \$8.6 billion, directly leaves the state's economy.

Of our total energy use, \$2.4 billion is spent on residential energy use, \$1.4 billion on commercial energy use, \$2.3 billion on industrial energy use, and \$4.1 billion on transportation fuels. Five percent greater efficiency in each of these sectors would mean:

- \$120 million more for citizens to spend each year on household needs;
- \$70 million more each year for businesses to hire personnel, increase inventory and improve services;
- \$115 million more for industry to invest in job creation each year;
- \$205 million more for individual citizens, business and industry to divert from transportation fuel costs to meet a host of other needs.

The Department of Energy and the South Carolina Energy Office encourage organizations to become involved in this year's observance by sponsoring or participating in activities to promote energy awareness. With everybody's help, our fellow citizens, coworkers, and communities will focus on the importance of energy in today's world and our responsibility to ensure that tomorrow's energy needs are met.

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